

Message Text

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67

ACTION AGR-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3577

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 10549

PASS AGRICULTURE FOR STEINMETZ, HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, GW

SUBJECT: MEAT INSPECTION: GERMANY CONSIDERING CHANGE OF
IMPORT REQUIREMENTS

1. THE BONN MINISTRY OF HEALTH IS DRAFTING REVISED PRO-
VISIONS GOVERNING APPLICATION OF GERMAN MINIMUM REQUIRE-
MENTS TO MEAT IMPORTS. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION SHARED
WITH US IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, THE DEVELOPING LEGISLATION
WILL AUTHORIZE THE MINISTER OF HEALTH TO ALLOW IMPORTS
FROM FOREIGN ESTABLISHMENTS ON THE BASIS OF "EQUIVALENCY
OF PROCEDURES AND FACILITIES" RATHER THAN STRICT COM-
PLIANCE WITH EACH PROVISION.

2. THE SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT THE GERMAN APPROACH WOULD
BE DIFFERENT FROM THE CURRENT POLICY OF SEVERAL OTHER EC
COUNTRIES ACCEPTING STANDARDS OF ALL MEAT PLANTS OF A
FOREIGN COUNTRY INDISCRIMINATELY AS EQUIVALENT WITH
THEIR STANDARDS. UNDER THE CONSIDERED "INDIVIDUAL EQUIV-
ALENCY" THE FOREIGN GOVERNMENT PRESENTING ESTABLISHMENT
CERTIFICATES WOULD STATE FOR EACH PLANT ANY DEVIATIONS
FROM THE GERMAN PROVISIONS AND EXPLAIN BY WHICH MEASURES
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EQUIVALENCY IS GUARANTEED.

3. THE MINISTER OF HEALTH WOULD DECIDE ON ELIGIBILITY OF A CERTIFIED PLANT UPON REVIEW OF THE INFORMATION SUBMITTED. AT THIS EARLY STAGE OF DISCUSSION IT APPEARS RATHER CERTAIN THAT, IF ADOPTED, THE NEW PROGRAM WOULD ELIMINATE SUCH OBSTACLES AS SEPARATE SUSPECT SLAUGHTER FACILITIES AND TIME OF INSPECTION. THERE ARE STILL DIFFERENCES OF OPINION CONCERNING THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION. HOWEVER, THE MOVE IS REGARDED AS "REVOLUTIONARY" BY HEALTH MINISTRY OFFICIALS.

4. THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS TO BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1975 ARE SCHEDULED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE BUNDESTAG AFTER SUMMER RECESS IN MID-SEPTEMBER.

5. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO EVALUATE THE REASONS FOR THIS SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN ATTITUDE, THERE HAVE BEEN CERTAIN INDICATIONS THAT A CHANGE WAS INEVITABLE. U.S. PORK PLANTS HAVE NOT BEEN CERTIFIED BY THE GERMAN MINHEALTH AUTHORITIES FOR OVER HALF A YEAR. HOWEVER, U.S. STATISTICS INDICATE THAT GERMAN PURCHASES HAVE REMAINED AT ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL AS WHEN U.S. PORK PLANTS WERE CERTIFIED TO SHIP MEAT TO GERMANY. THE TRADE HAS INFORMED US THAT THE U.S. PORK LIVERS CONTINUE TO BE IMPORTED THROUGH OTHER COUNTRIES. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE ARE NO OTHER COUNTRIES BESIDES THE U.S. WHICH HAVE ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF PORK LIVERS TO MEET THE GERMAN DEMAND. THE PROBLEM HAS BECOME SO CRITICAL FOR IMPORTERS IN NORTHERN GERMANY THAT ONE IMPORTER IN THAT AREA DECIDED TO PURCHASE A U.S. PACKING PLANT AND CONFORM TO THE GERMAN REGULATIONS. THE GERMAN FIRM, AFTER SOME RESEARCH, DECIDED THAT THE ADDITIONAL COSTS OF MEETING THE GERMAN INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE PROHIBITIVE AND DECIDED NOT TO MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN A U.S. PLANT. UNDOUBTEDLY, THIS INFORMATION WAS PASSED ON TO THE GERMAN INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

6. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO INFORMALLY INFLUENCE THIS PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO INSURE THAT IT WILL ALLOW U.S. PLANTS TO BE CERTIFIED FOR EXPORT TO GERMANY, AND WE WILL KEEP CONFIDENTIAL

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WASHINGTON INFORMED ON DEVELOPMENTS.
HILLENBRAND

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